



**Chris Danou's Capitol Report**  
Another School Year is Almost Here!

It's that time of year again! I'm sure most people will agree with me that the summer went very fast, as it always seems to do. Between spending time with family, friends and neighbors at different events and various activities in and around the community, region and state, summer is a great time that seems to go even faster each year.

I always feel like summer really ends when I send my two boys off for their first day of school. But, even though summer ends, another year of opportunities is around the corner. After all, school isn't just about learning in the classroom. It provides our kids with the opportunity to be creative, discover interests and talents, make relationships and develop social and other skills that prepare them for the future.

We know that Wisconsin students are prepared well for the future based on how they rank nationally when it comes to ACT scores. According to numbers released by the Department of Instruction (DPI) from 2014, Wisconsin students ranked second in the nation, only behind Minnesota in average ACT scores. After further review of those numbers, I was proud to see there were six school districts in the 92<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District that scored the national average of 22.2 or above. Not only is that a good sign for our students, but it's also a testament to our schools and teachers in our community.

Historically, Wisconsin has taken great pride in offering quality public education. The past few years have been difficult for community public schools with decreasing enrollment, budget cuts and a politically divisive climate toward teachers in Madison. In fact, one middle school principal recently told me that only eight people applied for a teaching job that would've witnessed dozens of applications only a few years ago. He also informed me that a principal from another nearby school district received twenty applicants for a teaching position that drew nearly one hundred a decade ago.

With information like this, it's only fair to assume that there aren't as many people striving to be educators due in part to the political climate in Wisconsin. I think this is extremely unfortunate because, in my conversations with most educators and administrators, it's clear they have a talent to teach as well as a passion for their students that we should recognize and appreciate. It's that passion that not only prepares our kids for things like the ACT, but it's also that passion that helps prepare them for the future, no matter what career or profession they choose to pursue.

With another school year officially under way, I want to take a moment to say 'Thank You' to our teachers and 'Good Luck' to our students. I'm so thankful for everything you contribute to our community in making it a great place to work, live and raise a family. I wish you all well and I hope you have an excellent school year that brings learning, growth and great memories that last a life time.

